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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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classification. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

DATE: September 15, 1965

FROM : American Embassy Guatemala

SUBJECT: INTERNAL SECURITY: Monthly Guerrilla Report

REF : A-63, August 7, 1965.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDQ/MR
REVIEWED BY *EJ* DATE OCT 1981
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

Communist guerrilla and terrorist activity during the past month has been marked more by several inconclusive encounters between Government forces and small groups of extremists than by any markedly successful operation by either side. This is probably attributable to the severe blow suffered by the extremists in the July raids on several of their strongholds (Embtel 42), indicated that indeed they are "lying low" for a while and re-organizing to absorb their losses

As a result, only one significant strike was made by the terrorists. On the morning of August 16, unidentified (although the Police claim to have made several arrests) individuals killed two brothers, Humberto and Inocencio Del Busto Rodriguez, as they departed for work in Guatemala City. The murders occurred because the brothers, who owned a finca and a sawmill in the Zacapa area, had informed on guerrilla activity near their property. They apparently had been warned that they were on the assassination list, and an attempt had been made to blackmail them before the assassinations actually occurred.

Other activity seemed to favor the Government forces. The Army was reported to have undertaken an offensive operation around August 10 in the Zacapa-Izabal area, and although there was no significant encounter, at least it may be assumed that it kept the guerrillas off balance. On August 13, a total of nineteen terrorists who had been captured earlier were formally charged with their crimes. Around August 21, the press reported (although the GOG denied) that the military police had a brief gunfight with

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several terrorists in Escuintla (guerrilla leader YON Sosa was alleged to be one of the terrorists in the group. Two terrorists were captured; YON Sosa was one of those who escaped). Finally on August 29, it was reported that an Army unit in Quirigua (WEEKA 35) had a firefight with guerrillas (allegedly sparked by the destruction of a bus owned by YON Sosa's mother) which resulted in several military being wounded. No statistics were announced on guerrilla losses, if any. This latter incident resulted in several grossly exaggerated stories in the local press that as many as six had been killed and strong but unfortunately false rumors were heard that YON Sosa was one of them.

Otherwise, there seemed to be little activity. A few questionable occurrences of violence were noted, but these activities seemed more the result of banditry, robbery or accident. As mentioned above, the extremists definitely appeared to have suffered a considerable blow last July and are not yet in a position to resume more extensive activity.

COMMENT: While the immediate prospects for the extremists are not particularly favorable given their recent set-backs, the month did see a great deal of other political maneuvering, rumors of coup attempts, and refusals to compromise on the part of political parties (to the point where Chief of Government Enrique Peralta was finally forced to warn the politicians that the army was ready to step back into the political picture if they failed to resolve their problems.) (See Emotel 143). It is these factors, of course, which give encouragement to the extremists and improve their long-term prospects if they continue unabated.

Fortunately, on the positive side, the GOG during the month also granted an exploitation concession to the International Nickel Company. This opens the way for a possible 60 million dollar investment in the area of greatest guerrilla strength (the Departments of Zacapa and Izabal), which in the long run should help alleviate many of the economic problems of the area which make the presence of guerrillas possible (WEEKA 34).

For the Ambassador:

Edward V. Nef

Edward V. Nef
Second Secretary of Embassy

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